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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.











THE  
ELECTION  
OF  
MR. LINCOLN:

A NARRATIVE OF THE CONTEST IN 1860

FOR THE  
PRESIDENCY OF THE UNITED STATES.

BY MONS<sup>R</sup>. C. CLARIGNY.

TRANSLATED FROM THE "REVUE DES DEUX MONDES,"

BY  
SIR WILLOUGHBY JONES, BART.

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## PREFACE.

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THE accompanying narrative by Mons. Clarigny, appeared in the *Revue des deux Mondes*, for Dec. 1, 1860. It contains a concise and graphic account of all the varied phases of that great struggle which seems destined to result in a material increase or diminution of Negro slavery, and thereby to form an epoch in the social history of mankind. It will be seen that the author does not share the opinion entertained by many that the present crisis will be fatal to the American confederation, and that he anticipates for South Carolina a speedy submission after a short and noisy trial of quasi-independence. But allowing the soundness of his arguments, there yet remains one element of disorganization to which, perhaps, he has hardly given sufficient weight, it is the reign of terror of white *sans-culottes* in the Slave States. Already the ominous sound "forced loan" is making itself heard, and symptoms show themselves which seem to indicate the pressure on the body politic, of those who have all to gain and nothing to lose by a convulsion. The evil effect of slavery is far more

apparent and more real on the poor man than it is on the rich slave-owner. The latter has the occupation and interests of wealth and authority, and may in many respects occupy the position and have the virtues of a sort of feudal chief. The poor man is born to labour, and that labour which constitutes his birthright he finds branded with the stamp of degradation. To work is to be a slave, to be like a slave. He recoils from work, and falls back on idleness and its concomitant misery, vice, and political turbulence. Thus in the Slave States the words "labouring man," so expressive to our ears, conveying as it does the idea of that sound-headed and sound-hearted class, who form the solid basis of our social economy, is unknown ; the white man's patrimony has been filched from him, to become the curse of his black brother.

The one predominant overwhelming idea of the lazy, worthless white pauper, who forms the scum of the Southern towns, is to obtain possession of a Negro whom he may flog and starve, and by whose labour he may himself be supported. His political panacea is therefore the reopening of the Slave Trade, or in other words, the dissolution of the Union, by which means alone he can ever hope to gratify his darling wish. It is in this class that the only real element of danger to the Confederation is to be found. Statesmen will not fling away the labours of a life by destroying that glorious country that they one day hope to govern. Landowners,

professional men, merchants, all the educated intelligent classes are prepared to stand by the Union, it is with the dangerous classes alone of the South that her central Government will *ultimately* have to deal.

South Carolina has deserted the Union. She has cut the cable by which she was moored to her firm anchorage—the Confederation. Should she persevere in her secession, it would seem to be easy, by the light of the past, to cast her political horoscope; to predict those troubles by which she is destined

“To leave a name at which the world turns pale,  
To point a moral, or adorn a tale.”

We shall soon be told that the *hostility* of the North has rendered necessary the establishment of a Committee of public safety. Then the cry of a licentious multitude, uncurbed and desperate, will arise for blood and gold. An endeavour will be made to satiate the monster with Negro blood; but he has revelled enough in that already;\* it palls on

\* To those who would wish to know the extent of cruelty and wickedness towards the free Negroes and slaves into which panic has hurried the Legislatures of the Southern States, and especially South Carolina, the Translator would strongly recommend the perusal of the article of M. Élisée Réclus, in the “Revue des Deux Mondes,” for Dec. 15, 1860. It contains a narrative of thrilling interest and inconceivable iniquity, based upon authentic documents. At the root of the whole lies the famous, or rather infamous, Dred Scott decision, in which all these fountains of bitterness take their rise.



his palate ; and, besides, it brings no gold. It will then be found that the more respectable and opulent citizens *sympathize* with the Northern States, and when once this mine is opened, there will be no lack of rich ore to satisfy the popular craving. If indeed, in this case, we found together those two great safeguards which have never yet failed, when combined, in checking license and crime, Anglo-Saxon lineage and free institutions, we might have hopes for the young republic. But we must remember that South Carolina is fettered with passports, and gagged by a censorship, to a degree unknown in the most tyrannical European despotisms. The passport system is not enforced by a regular, though stern, police, but by the inexorable fiat of Judge Lynch ; while the censorship does not coerce by fine and imprisonment, but by the tar-barrel, the bowie-knife, and the cord. It was safer for a Frenchman to have professed sympathy with Louis Capet in 1793, than it would be now for a citizen of Charleston to pity a forlorn slave, or acknowledge his belief in the simplest truths demonstrable by reason, or enforced by Christianity. Reasoning by analogy, the spectacle in store for the world and for civilization is the well-known drama of anarchy and bloodshed ; and it is no marvel that the eyes and thoughts of men should be rivetted upon it. It remains to be seen what the effect of these anticipations will be on the other Southern States. They will be attractive to the worst portion of the popu-

lation; and the question is, have the upper classes power enough to resist the force with which the multitude will endeavour to urge them along? Self-preservation and political cowardice will make many converts; and unless all the power of the Federal Government, of the North, and of the central Slave States—deeply interested themselves in the preservation of order—is brought to bear on them, they will probably be carried away by the current of secession. Should this come to pass, we may again by the light of the past predict the future. Foreign war will be the safety-valve employed to stave off massacre and confiscation at home. Cuba will be invaded, and all the helpless South American republics will be handed over to the murder and rapine of a swarm of filibusters.

Such, in the event of a considerable secession, is the prospect before us; and for a few weeks, while Mr. Buchanan holds the reins of power, we can hardly expect that the Central Government will use its influence to save the world from this possible catastrophe. The recoil of anarchy in America would be severely felt in these islands; but this is not the place to discuss our proper attitude in the face of such a calamity. All we can now do is to join our efforts and influence to those of all that is good and worthy in the United States; to induce the Southern States that have not yet seceded to listen to the counsels of prudence and moderation.

To those who would wish to obtain a clear insight

into the working of American party, and the real nature of American institutions, the Essay of M. Clarigny cannot be otherwise than acceptable. The deep interest of the episode which he narrates, enables him to convey much information to the reader without fatiguing him with dryness, or boring him with dogmatism.

At the end of the work a note has been added containing a short analysis of the Dred Scott case, with extracts from the decision of the Court.

It would be uncourteous to close these few words of preface without acknowledging the kindness and urbanity with which the Editor of the "*Revue des Deux Mondes*" at once responded to the request of the Translator, to be allowed to place M. Clarigny's Essay in the hands of the English public.

CRANMER HALL,  
*Jan. 21st, 1861.*



## THE ELECTION OF MR. LINCOLN.

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THE political crisis which recurs every four years at the Election of a President has just passed over the United States. On the 6th of November were chosen simultaneously, in all the States of the Union, the electors who, in February 1861, will, in their turn, elect the President and Vice-President of the Republic. As these electors are merely delegates, and as their vote is in consequence settled beforehand, the contest is virtually at an end as soon as they are nominated; unless, indeed, no candidate has succeeded in obtaining an absolute majority of votes, in which case the nomination of the two first officers of the Executive escheats to Congress.

The summer preceding a Presidential Election is always a period of agitation and political effervescence; for neither party will resign itself without a desperate struggle to hand over for four years political power and patronage to its adversaries. On the present occasion, the battle has been fought with more than usual bitterness; and the fact that four candidates went to the poll, stamps this election as almost without precedent in American annals.

Yet this great party contest is far from presenting the peculiar features of interest that belonged to the election of 1856. The present state of things is in fact only the result and inevitable development of a moral revolution which took place four years ago, whose vast consequences and important bearings on the future of the Confederation was even then apparent to thoughtful and far-seeing men.

## I.

The election of 1856 will for ever be an epoch in the history of the United States; it marks one of those decisive moments which but rarely recur in the history of any nation. Then indeed came to pass an event, foreseen and foreboded for twenty years by American statesmen, an event which had been predicted as the inevitable forerunner of the dissolution of the Union. In all previous elections universal suffrage had to decide between men, or rather between political systems, whose supporters and partizans were to be found in every portion of the territory of the Confederation. In 1856, for the first time, the Confederation divided itself into two distinct portions: one-half of the Republic gave the immense majority of its votes to a candidate who had not a single vote in the other half, nay more whose very name was in itself a sufficient excuse for bringing persecution and outrage on a suspected supporter. South of a certain geographical line an

elector, who voted for Colonel Fremont, would have risked both liberty and life. The Southern States loudly declared, that if the candidate of the Northern States was elected they would secede from the Union ; and the Governor of Virginia, Mr. H. A. Wise, gave out, that, at the head of the Militia of his State, he would march on Washington, and seize the Capitol and the Federal Archives.

No doubt much of this was mere bluster, nevertheless the quarrel of North and South seemed so fraught with peril to the best interests of the Republic, that a third party immediately started up, which took for its motto the integrity of the Union. It recruited its followers partly in the ranks of the Democratic, and partly in those of the Anti-Slavery Republican party. In the Southern States it enlisted all the moderate men ; and all those who, being in their hearts opposed to the growth of slavery, had no opportunity allowed them of voting according to their convictions. In the North it obtained the support of those men of Anti-Slavery opinions who could not bring themselves to vote for the Democrats, and who yet were frightened at the thought of what might be the ulterior consequences of a victory of the Republican party. Notwithstanding this double support and the adhesion of several eminent citizens, the " American " or Unionist party only succeeded in carrying the suffrage of the single State of Maryland ; and while in some of the Southern States it almost equalled in numbers the



Democratic party, in the greater part of the Northern States it appeared in an insignificant minority. Its influence, however, on the election was very considerable, for by dividing the anti-slavery votes in the Central States, it gave to the Democratic party the victory in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Illinois, and Indiana. It had from the first been clear to the Democrats, that a candidate of decidedly pro-slavery principles would never go down in a single Northern State, and that their only chance of success was by opposing a Northern Citizen to the Republican Candidate. Their choice fell on Mr. Buchanan. They claimed for him, that by birth, education, and interests he belonged to a Free State—Pennsylvania; that the greater part of his life had been spent abroad in diplomatic pursuits; that in consequence he had kept aloof from the contests and dissensions of home politics; and that therefore none so fit as he to carry out a policy of concord and conciliation. The remnant of the Old Whig party, broken up in 1852, and all the moderate men who had not given in their adhesion to the Unionists, allowed themselves to be persuaded by these arguments, and, by giving the Democrats the majority in the Central States, they at the same time gave them the preponderance in the whole Union.

It was, therefore, to a policy of conciliation that Mr. Buchanan owed his election in 1856. He might, indeed, be said to owe it to the patriotism of

former opponents, who put aside party feeling, in the hope that by so doing, they might terminate a dissension formidable in its consequences to the very existence of the Confederation.

The wishes of the American people manifested themselves still more clearly in the elections to Congress. If all the States that voted for Colonel Fremont had sent Republican representatives to Congress, the new President would have found himself face to face with a hostile legislature, and his government would have been paralyzed. This, however, did not prove to be the case; the elections in the North Western and Central States went in favour of those candidates who, though opposed to the extension of slavery, were yet ready to give the President a general support. Mr. Buchanan thus obtained a majority of 35, at least, in the House of Representatives, while the support of the Senate, formed mainly of Democrats, was assured to him.

It seemed that there could be but one line of policy for the new President. He had only to remember how his election had been brought about to see the way clear before him. Evidently his only course was strict impartiality on the slavery question, and a soothing and calming policy towards the Northern States. Mr. Buchanan, however, thought he saw in his own success one more proof of the irresistible ascendancy of the Slave States. He had come into power with the idea of conquering Cuba

or Mexico, and encircling his presidency with a halo of glory ; and in the hope of obtaining for his pet scheme the support of the Southern States, he determined to make use of his majority to decide in their favour that question—the question of Kansas—which, above all others, divided the North from the South of the Union. The Southern States insisted on introducing slavery into that territory, notwithstanding the opposition of the majority of the inhabitants. Mr. Buchanan gave them his strenuous and systematic support, though in so doing he ran the risk of lighting again the hardly extinguished embers of two civil wars ; he determined that Kansas should be received into the Confederation as a Slave State. The President expected to carry the vote with a high hand, and he then hoped that the inertia of public opinion would induce it to recognize an accomplished fact ; the result, however, disappointed his expectations ; his majority failed him. The Northern Democrats who came to Congress prepared to support the President, refused to follow him in his pro-slavery campaign, for they felt that to do so would be to fly in the face of their constituents, and to close the doors of Congress upon themselves for ever. Mr. Stephen Douglas, Senator for Illinois, a man of commanding talent, and whose prospects of the Presidency were bound up in the form that the Slavery question might assume, was the leader of this opposition to Mr. Buchanan. It was he who had proposed the repeal of the Missouri



Compromise,\* and who by so doing had, in truth, originated the Kansas question; his initiative in this matter had brought him a great meed of popularity in the Southern States, and at the elections of 1852 and 1856 he had been the favourite candidate of those States for the Presidency,—and it was this very circumstance that had caused his name to be withdrawn on the present occasion when it was found to be necessary to conciliate the Free States. Mr. Douglas aspired to succeed Mr. Buchanan in the Presidency; and his two previous disappointments, Col. Fremont's formidable majority in the North, the growth of anti-slavery opinions in the central States, where the Democratic party could no longer make head against a possible coalition of Unionists and Republicans, had taught him the lesson that no candidate could succeed who had not the support of some of the Central in addition to that of the Southern States. Himself a Free-state man, possessing a considerable fortune, having a paramount influence in his own State of Illinois, and many friends in Indiana and New York, why should not he in 1860 become the object of a compromise of the same nature as that which had just seated Mr. Buchanan in the Presidential chair? He considered that he had done enough to make himself safe with the Southern States, his object

\* The "Missouri Compromise" was an Act passed in 1821, on the occasion of Missouri being admitted into the Confederation. It enacted that Slavery could not legally be introduced into any Territory north of  $36^{\circ} 30'$  of latitude.

must now be to keep on terms with the North. He endeavoured, therefore, to assume that mediatorial position which, properly speaking, ought to have belonged to the President. The more Mr. Buchanan, irritated at the opposition he encountered, insisted upon coercing Kansas, the wider the breach became between them. When the bill to admit Kansas into the Union as a slave State was brought before Congress, Mr. Douglas resolutely opposed it, and all the Northern Democrats followed him into opposition. He had, he said, proposed the repeal of the Missouri Compromise to enable the inhabitants of the newly settled territories to decide the slavery question for themselves, and not for the purpose of allowing them to be coerced into slave institutions against their will; the inhabitants of Kansas declined to admit slavery, their decision ought to be respected. The opposition of Mr. Douglas and his friends threw out the bill, on which hinged the whole policy of the President, and by so doing evoked in a fiercer and more bitter form the old antagonism of North and South.

When the Conservatives of the Central States, who had voted for Mr. Buchanan, saw their champion resign his position of independence and neutrality, and assume, in its place, that of the Apostle and Advocate of Slavery, give up his guardianship of the national interests to become the head of a party, they once for all broke with his administration. Already the greater part of the Unionists had gone

over to the Republicans, or had amalgamated with them. From this time forward all the local elections went against the Government; even in Pennsylvania, his native state, Mr. Buchanan saw the electors reject every representative who had voted for his measures, and among them his oldest and dearest friends. On the other hand, he endeavoured in vain to oppose the re-election of Mr. Douglas in Illinois, his adversary re-entered the Senate in triumph, at the close of an election which had attracted the attention of the whole Union.

At the opening of the Session of 1860, Mr. Buchanan's majority had disappeared. The Republicans, though still in a minority in the Senate, of which only a sixth part is annually re-elected, formed the half of the House of Representatives. To prevent their getting the Speakership, it became necessary either that the Northern Democrats should vote for a Southern man, or else that the members from the South should vote for a supporter of Mr. Douglas. Neither party was prepared to make this sacrifice of their opinions. While, therefore, the Senate was debating with much violence upon a proposed committee on the Harper Ferry affair, the responsibility of which it was endeavoured to saddle on the Republican party, the House of Representatives was wasting its time in fruitless divisions for the Speakership. This state of things continued for three months, at the end of which time, one member went over from the Southern

party, and by so doing gave to the Republican Candidate the number required to form an absolute majority. The greater part of the Session having been thus employed, Congress had hardly proceeded to business, when it was obliged to virtually prorogue itself, for the purpose of allowing its members to take part in the preliminary meetings of the great presidential electoral campaign. And here it will be necessary to explain briefly the nature of American party-organization.

Every party in the United States has an organization modelled on that of the Central Federal Government. In each State a central committee is established, which corresponds with the committees in each of the electoral districts, which again have under them committees in each locality. Whenever an election is in prospect, either for a Town-councillor, or a member of the State Legislature, or a member of the House of Representatives, the committee, into whose attribute the vacancy falls, assembles, and selects the candidate for the party. When, therefore, it becomes necessary to select a candidate for the place of Governor, Vice-Governor, Judge of the Supreme Court, or any other position to which the appointment is made by a vote of the whole Union, a "Convention" is called. The committees of counties or districts each name the same number of delegates, all these delegates assemble on a certain day, and select, by the vote of the majority, the candidate of



the party. The name thus chosen is published in the newspapers, and the local committees call "ratification meetings," at which all the members of the party are present. At these meetings the vote of the Convention is announced, a pompous eulogium is passed upon the fortunate candidate, and the meeting is pledged to his support. In the same way every four years, about six months before the Presidential election, a General Convention assembles in some town fixed beforehand by the preceding Convention, and thither every State despatches a number of delegates proportioned to the number of federal electors that it has the right to appoint. These delegates arrive with their appointments in due form, made out by the central committee of their several States. The Convention adopts in every respect the standing orders of the House of Representatives. Its first step is to appoint a committee composed of one delegate from every State, whose business it is to draw up a "platform," that is to say, a programme of the views and intentions of the party, its rallying cry in the coming election. Afterwards the candidates for President and Vice-President are nominated by open voting. It has been a standing order of the Democratic Convention since 1844 that the successful candidate for their nomination must obtain the votes of two-thirds of their body. In every State the name selected by the Convention is submitted to the ratification of the people, on which occasion the party summons its

most powerful speakers, and endeavours to make a demonstration as imposing and formidable as possible.

All this complicated organization is extremely expensive. The candidates of every kind and their supporters have to subscribe to pay Convention expenses, correspondence, circulars, voting tickets, handbills, not to mention salvos of artillery, serenades, torchlight processions, and all the other accessories of an American election. A far greater evil, however, is the absolute suppression of the freedom of voting. In the United States, as in Europe, the numerous class of busy intelligent men has but little time to give to politics, and it rarely happens that a man seriously occupied in business or literature has time to attend regularly a political committee. These committees, particularly those of the lowest order, have therefore fallen into the hands of briefless barristers, doctors without patients, general agents, and all the ruck of place-hunters who devote themselves body and soul to a party in the hopes of obtaining some small situation. Such is the class, therefore, that nominates the delegates who proceed to the Convention to select the candidate of the party. The immense majority of the citizens have no option, save either not to vote at all, or else to vote for one of the candidates so nominated. Sometimes it happens in an election that a single ballot is to fill up a number of places of different sorts, in that case the elector must

accept blindly the ten or twelve names given to him ; the utmost he can do is to omit a name he dislikes, and by so doing lose one of his votes ; it would be hopeless to substitute the name of the most eminent citizen, for he would thus give him only a single worthless vote. A subscriber to the 'New York Tribune' applied lately for its advice in the following dilemma : he approved of the candidate selected by his party for President, but he disapproved of the nomination for Vice-President, at the same time the federal electors, for whom alone he had personally a right to vote, were pledged to both these candidates ; how was he in such case to vote according to his conscience ? The newspaper was unable to solve his difficulty.

No individual can hope for success in a struggle against a system whose ramifications extend over the whole territory, and it has been often remarked that Washington himself, if he returned to earth, could not get himself elected village sexton without the patronage of some party. A man may enjoy great personal popularity, but that will not give him throughout the Confederation newspapers that will write for him, speakers that will speak for him, printers and bill-stickers who will work for him, and, last not least, citizens who will stand as federal electors on purpose to vote for him. He may possibly get the vote of one State or even two, De Witt Clinton got the vote of New York, and Daniel Webster of Massachusetts, but such votes were

after all but a useless tribute of esteem given by the State to an illustrious citizen.

The foregoing considerations will have shown how absolutely necessary it is to a public man to belong to one of those permanent organizations, disposing of large funds, having at their command a host of subordinate agents of every kind, and powerful enough to raise to the Presidency men like Messrs. Pierce and Polk, whose fame had hardly spread beyond their county, until intrigue, a happy accident, and the impossibility of deciding between rival candidates brought their names before a convention. As soon, therefore, as Mr. Douglas had finally broken with Mr. Buchanan, all the energies of the President and of the extreme section of the Southern men were devoted to proving that the senator for Illinois had deserted his party, that he had voluntarily separated himself from his political friends, and that he had no longer a right to be included among the Democrats. The question as to the soundness of Mr. Douglas's democratic principles led to endless discussions in the press and in Congress. In his defence, Mr. Douglas did not for a moment attempt to justify himself on public grounds, he declared that all he had done was for the interest of his party, that he had strictly kept within the programme adopted at Cincinnati in 1856, and that to read this programme in the light of the Southern States was to lose the free States, and thus achieve the ruin of the democratic party.



If they turned him out, he said, they must also turn out all those men who had been the best defenders of the Southern cause, who had fought the hardest fight against the Republicans, and to whom Mr. Buchanan owed his election. Let the South stand opposed to the unbroken phalanx of the North, and they would soon learn the bitter lesson of humiliation and defeat. To this the ultra party, the "fire-eaters" as they were called, Jefferson Davis, senator for Mississippi; Yancey, senator for Alabama; Slidell and Benjamin, senators for Louisiana, made answer, that in that case there would be an end of the Union, that the South was quite able to form a separate and independent Confederation, that in the meanwhile it would not suffer its interests to be sacrificed to the personal ambition of any man, and that it would not endure hesitation, equivocation, or treachery. At the same time, Mr. Douglas was reminded of the fate of Mr. Van Buren, whose attempt to divide the democratic party and desert the cause of the South, had brought upon himself an immediate and final exclusion from office.

These discussions, repeated over and over again, had filled the early months of the session of 1860; they foreshadowed the storms that would arise in the convention about to assemble in April to choose the candidate for the democratic party. On either side there was equal confidence and equal animosity. Mr. Douglas thought himself sure of the nomi-

nation. He was in the democratic party the only important Northern man; no one could compare with him for talent, reputation, or parliamentary experience; all-powerful in Illinois, and possessing great influence in Indiana and Michigan, he alone could bring to the party a solid support; in the South he saw no one who had a chance of success in the free States; he considered himself therefore to be in fact the indispensable bond of union to the two sections of the party. He was aware that he possessed the almost unanimous support of the Northern delegates; the ablest and most influential men of the South, his colleagues in the Senate, were his personal friends; he therefore expected, not indeed to escape violent attacks, but that when it came to the vote he should have in his favour a majority of the convention, and that to that majority the recalcitrant ultras would be compelled to bow. This confidence of Mr. Douglas greatly incensed his opponents, they resented as an insult the tone in which his newspapers announced his certain triumph, and promised forgiveness to those who after the contest might seek his pardon. In consequence they spared no pains to obtain from the committees of their several States the nomination of delegates pledged *against* Mr. Douglas, and by the support of the Federal administration they succeeded. The President himself, his character naturally obstinate and violent, untamed by age, his heart overflowing with bitterness at the recollection

of his defeats, entered with all his soul into this plot against the man whom he considered to be his evil genius. The government officers of every kind, whether employed in the revenue, post-office, or any other department, received notice, under pain of dismissal, that they must support the section of the party opposed to Mr. Douglas.

The Democratic convention assembled at Charleston in South Carolina, on the 23rd of April, 1860. The delegates from the North-West arrived unanimously pledged to support Mr. Douglas, and to stick to him to the last; of those from the North-East, the majority were in his favour, the only exceptions being a limited number of government officials. The delegates from Mississippi, Texas, Louisiana, Florida, and Alabama, led by the Senators Slidell and Yancey, declared war to the knife against his pretensions, and in this they were backed up by South Carolina and Georgia. The central States, Missouri, Tennessee, Kentucky, and Maryland were a good deal divided. At Charleston itself a strong feeling of irritation prevailed against the North, and a considerable pressure was put upon the convention by the populace of the town, reinforced by the crowd of Southern visitors that thronged its streets.

Mr. Douglas's friends wished to come to a vote as soon as possible. They calculated upon the moral effect of a large number of supporters at the first round; they expected that two other candidates

would be started, a moderate man by the central States and an ultra by the Southern, that after two or three rounds the friends of the former would see that their case was hopeless and would transfer their votes to Mr. Douglas, and that by this means he would obtain the requisite majority of two-thirds ; as to the bare majority they never doubted that they should get it at the very first vote. The ultras, however, were by no means equally anxious to display their numerical inferiority. They declared that they had no candidate either for the Presidency or Vice-Presidency, that they did not seek to nominate any one for either of these offices, but that they were determined to have real guarantees for the interests of the Southern States. A compromise had been forced upon them in 1856, which they were told was to work wonders for them, and yet every political question had been decided against them. They said they would not be made fools of again ; let the North select for their candidate a Southern man, and they pledged themselves to accept him be he who he might, with the programme of '56, or even without any programme at all ; but in default of a candidate whose name spoke for itself, they insisted upon a clear and unmistakeable programme, one that would calm every apprehension and remedy every grievance of the slaveholders. Mr. Douglas's friends could not possibly agree to a proposal especially aimed against their candidate ; the ultras then proposed, and suc-



ceeded in carrying, a resolution that before proceeding to a vote the convention should, according to precedent, draw up the usual programme.

Having succeeded thus far, the next step of Mr. Douglas's opponents was to endeavour to draw up a programme that that gentleman could not possibly accept. The Southern delegates instructed their representatives in the Platform Committee to take for their point of departure the resolutions that had been laid before the Senate of the United States by Mr. Jefferson Davis, of Mississippi, and which affirmed it to be a duty incumbent on Congress to protect slavery in the Territories. It was impossible to take a line more directly adverse to Mr. Douglas. When, in fact, he had proposed the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, he had done it upon the ground that Congress had no more right to forbid than it had to impose slavery upon the newly settled Territories, and that any step it might take in favour of either party would be an interference with the right of the colonists to decide for themselves. When on former occasions he had been accused in the Northern States of being a partizan of slavery, Mr. Douglas had always distinctly denied the charge. It had been his wish, he had stated, to leave such questions, which indeed were no concern of Congress, to be settled by nature and by the will of the population. Wherever slave labour was more profitable than free labour, self-interest stronger than Congress would employ it; wherever, on the

other hand, the converse was true, it was useless to try to force in slavery by legislative enactment. Why then not allow the question to be settled by the simple rules of political economy, by which, do what they might, it would be decided at last? For his own part, he added, in all that he had done, he had had but one object in view, to put a stop to irritating debates by forbidding Congress to interfere in a matter in which it was powerless for good, and where all interference was a violation of the right of the citizens to govern themselves. This simple solution, which promised to put an end to the everlasting bickerings of the pro and anti-slavery parties, was immensely popular among the Conservative population of the Central and Western States, and though much carped at by the Republicans, who nick-named it the principle of Squatter Sovereignty, it proved a tower of strength to Mr. Douglas in the Valley of the Mississippi in 1856, when, after withdrawing from the contest himself, he promoted by every means in his power the cause of Mr. Buchanan, supposing that he was thereby fighting his own battle for 1860.

There is no convincing angry men ; the wisest of the Southern party would willingly have accepted Mr. Douglas's solution as perfectly satisfactory. It insured them against any endeavour to forbid slavery in the provinces they might some day conquer or annex from Mexico. The ultras, however, pointed out a danger in this doctrine of squatter

sovereignty ; it permitted, indeed, the inhabitants of the Territories to introduce slavery, if such was their pleasure, but on the other hand it enabled them to forbid it if they liked, and that was a stretch of authority these gentlemen could never allow. If Congress, they argued, has not the right to forbid slavery how can the provisional governments, established by its authority in the Territories, its own creatures, have a power which it does not itself possess ; slavery, therefore, cannot be forbidden in the Territories, and hence it exists in all of them by right. When one of these infant communities has arrived at age of discretion, and thereby has acquired the right to enter the Confederation as an independent State, she can, in the plenitude of her power, permit or abolish slavery, but until that solemn coming of age, she has no power to reject slavery from her soil. If, then, one of these infant States ventures to interfere with the property of the slave-owners it is the necessary duty of Congress to compel her to acknowledge their rights. The judgment pronounced by the Supreme Court in the Dred Scott Case was quoted in support of this view. In this judgment it was laid down that no difference existed between a slave and any other property, and further that all citizens had a right to convey themselves and their property to any part of the United States, and to obtain for such property the protection of the laws. The resolutions before mentioned of Mr. Jefferson Davis, which had been occupying the time of the

Senate, to the exclusion of public business for two months, had this object in view, that the Senate should resolve that it was the duty of Congress without delay to vote the necessary laws for the protection of slavery in the Territories.

It is easy to see how far an argument of this kind can be carried; the republican party, in their opposition to Mr. Douglas, did not fail to push it to its extreme consequences, and then hold them up as the result of denying the power of Congress. They argued that logic was altogether on the side of Jefferson Davis; that if Congress had not the power to legislate against slavery that institution was legal wherever the American Constitution extended, that freedom was the exception and slavery the rule, inasmuch as the former could only exist by virtue of a special act and declared will of the people. And in any case the will of the people was subjected to considerable restrictions. A Northern citizen could certainly take his goods and chattels to the South, and when there either keep them or sell them as he thought best. Did it not therefore follow, in accordance with the law as laid down by the Supreme Court, that a Southern planter had a right to come to New York or Boston with his bevy of slaves, and either use them for his domestic purposes, or if he preferred it put them up for sale. Thus in vain had the Free States made it illegal for their citizens to possess slaves, they had not by so doing enfranchized their territory. A Southern man might still, if he

liked, inflict upon them the sight of slavery, and of its hideous concomitant the sale of human beings. That this was not an impossible case was proved by a cause pending at the time before the Supreme Court. A Virginian named Lemmon, on his way to Texas with two slaves, had arrived at New York to take the steamer to New Orleans. His slaves had been taken from him by virtue of the laws of New York, which forbid slavery within the limits of the State; they had been declared free by a decree of the Court of New York, confirmed on appeal by the Supreme Court at Albany. A subscription had been opened among the New York merchants, who wished to hush up this unpleasant business, and Lemmon had been compensated for his loss: but at this point the State of Virginia had interfered, and had appealed to the Supreme Court of the United States, on the ground that the Courts of New York had no jurisdiction over a Virginian citizen. With the well-known leaning of the Supreme Court, in which sat a majority of Democrats, there could be no doubt how the decision would go. Such then was the pass to which Mr. Douglas had brought them by limiting the power and authority of Congress. Beginning with the attempt to allow the inhabitants of the Territories to decide for themselves between slavery and freedom, they had, step by step, arrived at the logical conclusion that slave-owners might force their institution even on Sovereign States who desired to be free.



Nothing could be more proper than such a prospect to foster the growing anti-slavery feeling of the North. To insert Mr. Jefferson Davis's resolutions, or even the substance of them in the programme of the Democratic party, would be to deprive the candidate of that party, who must accept their programme, of every vote without the limits of the Slave States. Mr. Douglas himself could not give his adhesion without repudiating every act and word of the last six years, and ruining for ever his influence, even in his own state of Illinois. Now this was exactly what his opponents wanted; they wished to place him in the dilemma, of either withdrawing, or else eating his own words. Mr. Slidell from Washington sent to the delegate of Louisiana a series of resolutions of the most irritating kind, while, on the other hand, Mr. Douglas desired his friends to stick to the programme of 1856, or, at all events, not to give way beyond a simple adhesion to the terms of the Dred Scott decision. It seemed likely that the Platform Committee would never be able to agree to any statement of principles; the fifteen delegates from the Slave States all voted together, while the Northern delegates tried to conciliate by proposing three or four forms, all drawn up with the view of satisfying the South, and at the same time shirking an absolute adhesion to the black code. At last Mr. Avery, of North Carolina, substituted a milder version for Mr. Slidell's irritating formula, which was carried by 17 to 16, in consequence of

the delegates of Oregon and California voting with the South, on the understanding that General Lane, senator for Oregon, should be the candidate for the Vice-Presidency.

In laying the report of the majority of the Committee before the Convention, Mr. Avery spoke out strongly and resolutely. He said, the time for half measures and shilly-shallying was past, that the South had carried concession to the utmost limit, and that from the present she must have full and complete satisfaction; that the doctrine of squatter-sovereignty was a more dangerous, because less open, attack than the Wilmot proviso.\* Mr. Payne, in the name of the minority of the committee, defended that doctrine, saying that it was a principle dear to the North and one that it would not abandon. If the Democratic party chose to repudiate it, that party must make up its mind to extinction, as it could no longer count upon the vote of a single free State. These speeches, delivered with perfect calmness and self-command on either side, evidenced a degree of rooted antagonism between the two sections that greatly impressed the meeting. Mr. King, formerly Governor of Missouri, then rose, in the hope of stilling the coming storm. He pronounced

\* During the last war against Mexico, Mr. Wilmot and other free-soilers introduced into all the measures passed, either for continuing the war or defining terms of peace, a clause or *proviso* that slavery could never be introduced into any province that might be ceded by Mexico.

himself against the programme of the majority ; he said that it would not, indeed, lose them the vote of Missouri, but that it must inevitably deprive them of every Free State vote, and by so doing extinguish the party. This brought up Mr. Yancey, the leader of the ultras, and the cheers that greeted him from the galleries showed on which side was the popular feeling in the South, he protested, he said, at what had fallen from the representative of a Slave State, and especially of a State the most exposed to the plots of the abolitionists. Energy and resolution were henceforward the only means of safety for the South. Was it possible, that after the lesson of 1856, with its sequence of humiliation and defeat, any one could recommend them to fall back on the old policy of trimming and expediency? No, better a hundred times for the South to fall, proclaiming her principles and demanding her rights, than for her to buy an inglorious and useless victory by the sacrifice of those rights and principles. If the Southern men were capable of such weakness, if for the empty glorification of electing their own candidate they chose to be the humble servants of a party of intriguers, and the willing tools of unprincipled ambition, they deserved to be hung on a gibbet higher than that of Haman. This insulting and irritating speech produced a warm reply from Mr. Pugh, senator for Ohio, an intimate friend of Mr. Douglas. Retracing events for a few years, Mr. Pugh proved, by unanswerable quotations, that

within that period every important Southern Statesman, including Mr. Yancey himself, had eagerly supported the doctrines they now attacked, and had stigmatized as inadmissible, senseless, and unconstitutional, the claims that now they advocated. It was with their own words and their own arguments that he opposed their impudent and unjustifiable pretensions.

Thus every speech in the debate aggravated the quarrel, and when Mr. Bigler, of Pennsylvania, proposed a third form, and moved that it be referred to the committee, he succeeded in carrying his motion. This attempt to stave off, if not to prevent, a breach that all felt to be imminent, also failed. The committee could not come to an understanding, and returned with two readings almost identical with those that they had before presented. The question was put to the vote in a storm of confusion. The result was that the programme of the majority, that is the programme of the Slave States was rejected by the Charleston convention by 165 against 138. The programme of the Free States was then put to the meeting and carried article by article, the greater number of the Southern delegates declining to vote. When the final question, that the programme be adopted, was about to be put to the vote, Mr. Walker, delegate from Alabama, addressed the meeting. Having read a written protest against the decision of the majority, he said, that in obedience to his instruc-

tions, he and all the other delegates from Alabama, retired from the Convention. Similar declarations were made, amidst profound silence, by the delegates of Mississippi, Louisiana, South Carolina, Florida, Texas, and Arkansas; the delegates of Virginia, Georgia, and Kentucky required time to consult on the proper course to adopt, and the meeting adjourned. When the Convention next assembled for business, the delegates of the seven seceding States absented themselves, and it was determined to select a candidate for the Presidency at once; the first vote gave no result, nor did any of the following votes, for Mr. Douglas, who from the first, had the bare majority, could never get beyond it, much less obtain the suffrages of two-thirds of the meeting. After, therefore, fifty-seven useless divisions, an adjournment was carried by 166 to 88; the Convention decided to re-assemble on the 18th of June, and that the place of assembly should this time be Baltimore.

The abortive result of the Charleston Democratic Convention produced a profound sensation throughout the Union. The Republicans hailed it as a pledge of the success of their candidate, and as a proof of the spread of their opinions. This great Democratic party, so proud of its universality, had then at last come to cut itself in half according to a geographical line of demarcation! It had become divided on this very question of slavery which it boasted to exclude from politics altogether. After



having so often reproached the Republicans with keeping alive irritating debates unnecessarily and from merely factious motives, it was itself a prey to this very agitation which it had stigmatized as gratuitous; and after having been the willing tool of the passions, the pretensions, and the terrors of the South, it had ended by breaking asunder bonds too galling to be any longer endured. Would not this prove to the nervous Conservatives of the North, who in 1856 had deserted their opinions and given victory to the Democrats, how mistaken they were? Would not this convince them that there was no limit to the demands of the South, and that nothing short of the sacrifice of the constitution itself could ever satisfy her? Thank God, the men of the North began to see their way clearly, and returning to the wholesome doctrines of the founders of the republic, they would now rally round the standard of freedom.

The exultation of the Republicans naturally occasioned a corresponding depression on the part of their opponents. Every one noticed the line adopted by the *Constitution*, of Washington, the especial organ of Mr. Buchanan. This paper would only see in what had happened a defeat of Mr. Douglas, upon which it dwelt with considerable complacency. Whatever people may think, said that paper, of what has happened at Charleston, one thing is clear and undeniable, that is, that the squatter sovereignty candidate has completely failed, and that his sup-

porters have no resource but to find another candidate who may be acceptable to the Democratic States. Any one who takes the trouble to inquire will be soon satisfied that Mr. Douglas has no means of getting over the opposition to himself on the part of the Democratic party in States which will certainly vote for a Democrat at the coming election. Any endeavour to contest this patent fact can only end in his political annihilation. This article of the "Constitution" was at once answered by the "Cincinnati Enquirer," one of the principal Democratic journals in the North; they argued that the defeat was for those who had endeavoured to change the nature of the party creed, and who had not been able to accomplish their wishes either by intrigue or by force. They had proved to a certainty that the party would never allow to be introduced into its programme that miserable heresy, that the citizens of a Territory had no right to exclude slavery, if such was their desire, and that it is the duty of Congress to force it upon them by a special law. "As to Mr. Douglas," continued the "Enquirer," "the candidate and favourite of the people, although he had to contend against the open and combined opposition of all the other pretenders to the Presidency, of the Central Government, and of the Southern Separatists, he yet obtained in more than fifty divisions three-fifths of all the votes given. He had obtained 152 votes, while all the other candidates put together did not poll 100; he had an actual majority of

the Convention, even if all the States had been present, and had voted. His nomination had only been prevented by adopting a rule which required two-thirds of the votes to constitute a due election. If the strength and magnitude of the forces combined against him be taken into consideration, it is assuredly one of the most remarkable personal triumphs on record. If the politicians who sat in the Convention had really represented the will of the people, Mr. Douglas would have been unanimously nominated at the first vote. It would seem to be impossible that the Convention, when it meets at Baltimore, can ignore such a fact, or mistake its meaning."

Such was also the opinion of the "Bangor Union" and the "Albany Argus," two influential papers, one of the State of Maine, the other of New York; they thought the adjournment would serve Mr. Douglas. They considered that reflection would show the Southern men that they had gone too far, that by breaking up the Democratic party they only handed over the victory to their enemies the Republicans, and tied their own hands. In fact all the Northern Democratic journals protested that concession had reached its limits, and that non-intervention must remain the fundamental principle of their party. "To abandon that principle," said the "Buffalo Courier," "would be worse than suicide; it would be the height of cowardice, meanness, and ignominy."

The Southern papers, however, showed no signs of repentance. "The Charleston Mercury" acknowledged that though Mr. Douglas could not himself be nominated at the next meeting of the Democratic Convention, yet he certainly had the power of preventing the nomination of any one else, inasmuch as he possessed half the votes. Everything therefore pointed to the conclusion that the Baltimore Convention would have the same result as that at Charleston. The "Mercury" was gratified at the prospect. It was far better, in their opinion, to have to do with an open enemy than with an enemy disguised under the semblance of friendship. A unanimous nomination could only take place by both parties consenting to contaminate themselves with equivocation and falsehood ; it was unworthy of the South to take any part in this wretched farce. She must have her rights acknowledged, and break with any party that would not acknowledge them openly. The "Chronicle" of Augusta, in Georgia, declared the rights of the South to be incompatible with the squatter sovereignty espoused by the Northern Democrats, and that those rights could not be abandoned ; while the "Mississippian" of Jackson loudly applauded the conduct of the delegates at Charleston, and declared that to have submitted to a sectional majority of the Convention would have been the death-blow to Democracy in the Southern States.

Thus in the press the battle was fought with the same vigour and animosity as in the Convention ; it

soon also made its entry into the Senate. Mr. Jefferson Davis, in a motion having reference to his resolutions, made a violent personal attack on Mr. Douglas. Mr. Clingman, of North Carolina, defended him, urging the Democratic party not to divide itself if it wished to preserve a chance of success; Mr. Benjamin, of Louisiana, followed, protesting against the sacrifice of principle to electoral success, or to the personal ambition of any individual; give me, said he, a programme that insures my rights and satisfies my fellow citizens, and then select any candidate you please who can honourably adopt it; the man you select shall be my candidate, I will canvass my State for him, I will devote to his service my time and my strength, I will speak for him whenever and wherever his friends may call on me to do so, nothing shall stop me; but I confess I have no heart to fight when I am to choose as my champion either a man who fairly and openly denies my rights, or one who acknowledges them indeed but wishes to cheat me out of them. I will endure neither the one nor the other. Mr. Benjamin made no secret of his hope that when the Northern Democrats knew all the truth they would not hesitate to form an alliance with the South, by the sacrifice of Mr. Douglas. He then narrated, at considerable length, a circumstance up to that time kept secret. It was that the dissension of the two sections of the party dated from the time when by their joint action they had carried the repeal of the Missouri Compro-



mise. In 1856, they nearly failed in coming to an understanding on a programme ; a rupture had been prevented by adopting an ambiguous formula which admitted, and had received, different interpretations in the North and in the South ; with the understanding, however, that a judgment of the Supreme Court should be obtained which should bind the whole party. That judgment had been obtained in the Dred Scott case, and therefore there could no longer be any question about squatter sovereignty. This curious revelation explained why the South would not accept the Cincinnati programme without adding a rider to it, and it also gave a key to those reproaches of treachery and bad faith which the South showered on Mr. Douglas, and which Mr. Benjamin did not spare him. Mr. Douglas, of course, seized the opportunity of answering all the attacks that had been made upon him. He spoke last ; he went fully into the history of the Democratic party, showing that the South had not always been so exacting, but that every victory gained for her by the Northern Democrats had been made the starting point for new pretensions. Reverting to the contests of 1850, he showed that he alone had stood up for the South against Mr. Clay and Mr. Webster, and that at that period the South strove in vain for the principle they now so utterly repudiated, the non-intervention of Congress in the Territories. It was not himself, or the Northern Democrats, that had changed their principles, it was the South who now combated what

they had so long desired; in vain did Mr. Davis, and his friends, try to contradict these facts, a series of unanswerable quotations silenced them. The inconsistency of his opponents was lashed by Mr. Douglas with polished sarcasm and afforded him an oratorical triumph; but there his advantage ended, for the wounds he had given were not easily healed, and his speech had rendered irremediable a quarrel as fatal to himself as it was to his opponents.

### III.

While the Senate was absorbed in these fiery debates, a Unionist Convention assembled at Baltimore and completed its labours in two days. This *via-media* party, which had voted for Mr. Millard Fillmore in 1856, had been torpid for three years. Its only remains of vitality were to be found in the Southern States, where it served as a rallying point to all who declined to support the extreme views of Mr. Buchanan. The general emotion caused throughout the Union by the John Brown invasion had appeared, however, to give it some renewal of life in the North. Great meetings had been held at Boston, New York and Philadelphia, to protest against the violent attack that had been made upon a Southern State, and to proclaim the principle of obedience to the laws and constitution. Men of influence had taken the initiative in these demonstrations, and Statesmen who in former days had held the highest places in the Northern States, and who

were supposed to have retired from political life, re-appeared upon the scene. It looked almost like a resurrection of the old Whig party, and the earnestness with which the commercial classes, so closely identified with the South, went into the movement, deceived many as to its importance and probable duration. It was resolved to re-organize at once the Unionist party, and hopes were entertained that it might have a powerful influence on the approaching Presidential campaign. It was the Convention of this revived party that met at Baltimore on the 9th of May, under the presidency of Mr. W. Hunt, formerly Governor of the State of New York. This meeting, if judged by the social position, the character and antecedents of its members, formed a far more important gathering than that which had just broken up at Charleston, or indeed, any meeting of the kind that had ever assembled in the United States; but it had the misfortune to represent no policy, to have no definite idea, and its members, though individually most highly respected, had been too long removed from the turmoil of political life to exercise any real influence on the masses of the population. It was an army of Generals, while the crisis called for millions of soldiers! Doubtless no parallel can be drawn between Mr. Hunt who represented New York at Baltimore, and Captain Rynders the delegate of the same town at Charleston. The former by birth, education, intellect and fortune, belonged to the first class of American

society. He had obtained all the honours that Universal Suffrage can confer ; successively member of the New York Legislature, member of Congress, and Governor of his State, he had in every position acquired the reputation of an honourable and able man. On the other hand the latter, absolutely uneducated, but gifted with a stentorian voice, and making up for his ignorance by coarse and ready wit, was a stump orator long in the pay of the Democratic party. Made a lieutenant of police as a reward for his political services, he was strongly suspected of taking bribes from the criminals who ought to have come under his clutches. This man, however, frequenting the water-side taverns, knowing by name all the newspaper hawkers, bill-stickers, all the paid cheerers and getters up of manifestations, was himself a power, and did not over-rate his influence when he said he had 10,000 votes in his waistcoat pocket. There was the weak point of the party of " old gentlemen " and " silvery heads " as they were nicknamed by both sides ; excellent well intentioned men, they tried to make up a party by drawing-room gossip, a few speeches, and a few newspaper articles, while they possessed no means of acting upon the masses of their countrymen.

The Unionists could not even fall back upon one of those appeals which tell upon the imagination, and are a substitute for argument. It was impossible for them to draw up a programme without

leaning to one or other of the two great parties, out of which they wanted to enlist their adherents. It required, therefore, very little debate to induce the Convention at Baltimore to decide that they would put out no programme ; in its stead they issued a party cry, "The Union, the constitution, and obedience to the laws, for ever !" It certainly was an ingenious way of getting out of the difficulty of deciding between North and South ; but unluckily all sides could appropriate this party watchword, Democrats and Republicans, both sides professed themselves to be devoted to the Union, the constitution, and obedience to the laws ; only they differed about the meaning of the word "Constitution," and each party hoped to make use of "obedience to the laws," to accomplish their own ends. With this vague formula the Unionists were certain to offend nobody, but they also ran the risk of gaining no adherents.

The Unionist Convention selected as its candidate Mr. John Bell, an old pupil of Henry Clay, and for many years member of Congress for Tennessee. Born at Nashville, in 1797, Mr. Bell adopted the bar as his profession, and devoting himself early in life to politics, at the age of twenty had a seat in the legislature of the State. In 1827, he was elected member of Congress for Tennessee, he sat for fourteen consecutive years, and ultimately became Speaker. Like Henry Clay, he began as a democrat, joined the Whig party on the question of the



Federal Bank, and stuck to them ever after. It was as a Whig that he became War Minister, under the short administration of President Harrison. He afterwards represented Tennessee, in the Senate, until March, 1859. Though citizen of a slave state, and himself a slave owner, Mr. Bell had always been conspicuous for the liberality and moderation of his views. While member of Congress, he had on two memorable occasions voted that petitions against slavery ought to be received by the House, not that he approved of the petitions, but because he thought the attempt on the part of the slave party to induce the House to reject them was an unconstitutional interference with public rights. As a supporter and defender of the Compromise of 1850,\* he had voted against the Kansas Bill, the “*fons et origo mali*” of the present crisis, and his sturdy opposition to Mr. Buchanan had cost him his seat in the Senate. If Mr. Bell’s political friends may have been able to lay to his charge some moments of vacillation, and some slight political inconsistencies, easily explained in a man who was voting almost invariably against the opinions of a majority of his fellow-citizens, no one ever for a moment suspected him either of interested views or of being biassed by private ambition. All parties alike acknowledged his talent, his high cha-

\* This Compromise, suggested by Mr. Clay, was to regulate the affairs of the Provinces detached from Mexico, and thereby put an end to the agitation against the Wilmot proviso.

racter, his integrity, and his patriotism. As a slave-owner, Mr. Bell could not be suspected by the South, while the North was sure to hail with enthusiasm a man who on several occasions had given his vote in favour of liberty, and who had sacrificed his position in public life at the shrine of his political convictions. Besides this Mr. Bell had stood by the economical principles of the Whig party, he was a decided protectionist, and as such acceptable to the manufacturing interests of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Indiana, States whose votes had decided the election of 1856, and who seemed destined to exercise the same influence on that of 1860.

For the Vice-Presidency the choice of the Convention fell upon a Northern man, Mr. Edward Everett, whose reputation in literature and in politics has crossed the Atlantic. Member of Congress from 1824 to 1834, Governor of Massachusetts during four years, Ambassador in London from 1841 to 1845, afterwards President of Harvard University, Mr. Webster's successor as Foreign Minister and Senator, Mr. Everett had in turn filled with credit all the high positions of his country. In 1853 he retired from politics, with the intention of devoting himself to literature. The John Brown invasion recalled him from his retirement. During all the winter of 1859 he took an active part in the Unionist demonstrations, and his character for eloquence shed considerable *eclat* on their proceedings. Whether in consequence of his age and the important public

positions he had filled, Mr. Everett expected to be selected for the Presidency, or whether success appeared to him to be hopeless, or whether he doubted his own popularity in the face of an electoral contest, must remain a question ; but certain it is that he hesitated long in giving his consent to become candidate for the Vice-Presidency, and that he only yielded at last to the repeated solicitations of his friends.

The Baltimore convention had chosen wisely. Never had men been brought forward more worthy to fill the two highest offices of the State ; and the cordial reception given by the upper classes to the names of Bell and Everett may for a moment have deluded the Unionist party with visions of success. They did not indeed hope or expect that their champions would be elected by popular vote, but they fancied themselves able to prevent the election of any other candidates. The Southern States, even if unanimous, were unable of themselves to form a majority ; now the Unionists counted on Maryland which, in 1856, had voted for Fillmore, on Tennessee because a candidate was always sure of his native state, on Kentucky because it always voted with Tennessee ; besides this they had hopes of Louisiana and South Carolina, in both of which States Fillmore had obtained a considerable number of votes, and where a split in the Democratic party might give them the majority. If three Slave States, and a fortiori five, voted for Bell, the Southern candidate,

be he who he might, could not obtain the majority. As for the Republican candidate they acknowledged the impossibility of wresting from him any of the New England States; but even supposing he had in his favour the fourteen States that had voted for Colonel Fremont including New York, those fourteen States would only give him 114 votes; and to obtain 152, which constitutes the bare majority, he must have in addition Pennsylvania with its 27 votes, and besides either Indiana or Illinois. The Unionists flattered themselves that Mr. Everett would give them Massachusetts; and they reckoned, as in 1856, to get votes enough in Indiana and Pennsylvania to prevent the Republican candidate from carrying it in either of those States. Thus in default of any candidate getting an absolute majority the nomination would fall to Congress, and there the two parties were so evenly balanced, that the chance was altogether in favour of a *via-media* candidate.

There was a savour of probability about all these calculations that could not escape the Republican party, they exercised, therefore, considerable influence upon the decisions of the Republican convention, which assembled at Chicago eight days after the Unionist convention at Baltimore. The general expectation was that Mr. Seward would be the candidate, and on many grounds a better selection could not have been made. Mr. Seward was without doubt the first man of the Republican party. Senator for the State of New York, of which he

had formerly been Governor ; he stood pre-eminent among the speakers in Congress. His clear and philosophic turn of mind enabled him to trace out with irresistible power the consequences that flowed from any principle, and his language, grave, firm, and convincing, and free from personality, influenced even those whom it did not persuade. His high character, the purity of his public and private life, his earnestness and sincerity, had won for him the esteem both of friends and enemies. He might almost be said to embody in himself the Republican party. For years he had stood almost alone in the Senate, fighting the battle of freedom against a majority of slaveholders, and never for a moment had he flinched from the contest. Constantly assailed with the most violent and bitter personal attacks, branded as a traitor, burnt in effigy, and threatened with death by the Southern men, he had never shown himself either intimidated or discouraged. It was, therefore, only justice in the Republican party to give to this valiant champion, who had fought so many good fights on her behalf, the highest recompense it was in her power to bestow. Friends and enemies alike expected it. And besides his other claims, the nomination of Mr. Seward ensured to the Republican party the State of New York with its thirty-five votes, more than one-fifth of the total number of votes required to carry the election. It seemed, therefore, certain if Mr. Seward had not the majority on the first division,



that most of the States who might, as was generally the case, have voted at the first round for one of their own citizens, would on the second division transfer their votes to him and give him a triumphant majority.

In a democracy, however, no one can arrive at pre-eminence with impunity; great talent must be atoned for like any other superiority, and it seems not unlikely that Mr. Seward will afford another instance of that fatality which has kept from the Presidential chair the three most remarkable men that America has produced for the last fifty years—Clay, Calhoun, and Webster. The Southern men finding him always foremost in the fight, had concentrated upon his head all their hatred and animosity; they had come to identify him with his party, the *Seward party*, as they called them. Every trifling word that fell from him was commented upon and distorted. In a meeting at Rochester, Mr. Seward, in speaking of the antagonism of slavery and freedom, happened to say, that it was a contest that could have no end. The expression that he applied to a contest of principles, was at once taken to refer to a contest of parties. He was accused of urging on a civil war. The name of Seward had in fact become a bugbear in the South, and was never mentioned without threats and curses. Unjust and unfounded as were these aspersions, well might the Republican party hesitate

before it took upon itself so great a load of hatred and terror !

Some local elections that came off during March in Rhode Island and in Connecticut were also a warning for the party. These two New England States had given in 1856 considerable majorities to Fremont, and the Republicans considered them safe. In Rhode Island, however, the Republicans had now barely escaped a defeat, and in Connecticut their candidate for governor, Mr. Burlingham, had only been elected by a majority of 600 on 80,000 recorded votes ; his election, even by that small majority, being due to his great personal popularity, and the well known moderation of his character and opinions. These two elections had shown them how much care was necessary, even in these old Puritan States, not to run counter to the conservative instincts of the masses. How much more, then, was it necessary to be careful with reference to those free States which, in 1856, had voted for Mr. Buchanan, and those who were bound to the South by the ties of neighbourhood and commerce ; such States, for instance, as Indiana, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. Nevertheless, Mr. Seward's friends arrived at the Convention of Chicago confident of success. They expected indeed that at the first vote Pennsylvania would vote for General Cameron, Ohio for Mr. Chase, Illinois for Mr. Lincoln, and Missouri for Mr. Bates ; but, feeling sure of New England, they were satisfied

that their candidate would obtain far more votes than any other, and that all the great States, after having separately paid a compliment to one of their own citizens by voting for him, would at the second round hand over their votes collectively to Mr. Seward. They were grievously mistaken ! Mr. Lane and Mr. Curtin, the Republican candidates for the governorship in Indiana and Pennsylvania respectively, men well acquainted with public opinion in their States, declared that Mr. Seward's nomination would ruin their own prospects of success, and that it would bring about in their States a defeat like that of 1856. Indiana, which had no local candidate, at once adopted the nomination of Mr. Lincoln candidate for Illinois ; Pennsylvania did the same at the second round, and Ohio at the third. Mr. Lincoln, who tied Mr. Seward at the second round, had, at the third round, a considerable majority. For the Vice-Presidency there was a strong feeling in favour of one of the Pennsylvania candidates, but the New England delegates, by way of reprisals, voted unanimously for Mr. Hannibal Hamlin, of Maine, who was elected at the second round. After carrying unanimously the programme that was laid before them, the Republican Convention dissolved itself, having completed its business in a single day.

More than thirty thousand persons from the neighbouring states had gathered together at Chicago, anxious to obtain the earliest possible intelli-

gence of the choice of the Convention. The name of Mr. Lincoln was received by this vast multitude with frantic exclamations of delight. The whole valley of the Mississippi seemed to be delirious with enthusiasm. This was the first occasion on which a candidate for the Presidency had been selected from without the limits of the old States. That Mr. Lincoln should be preferred to one of the most illustrious statesmen of the confederation appeared to be a solemn recognition of the fact that the Western States had attained their political majority, a homage rendered by the nation at large to the growing prosperity and future preponderance of those vigorous young communities. This feeling showed itself by a long series of noisy ovations, in which the constant rattle of fire-arms and roar of cannon gave utterance to the popular enthusiasm. This effervescence of the West, in itself an unforeseen omen of success, went far towards reconciling the Atlantic States to the choice of the Convention, and when the romantic and interesting early life of Mr. Lincoln became generally known the masses in those states warmly espoused the cause.

The grandfather of Abraham Lincoln was one of the hardy squatters, who with Daniel Boone migrated from Virginia to settle in Kentucky, and who paid with their lives the conquest of that "land of blood." He was killed by the Indians. His son died young in 1815, leaving a widow in poverty, and several sons, of whom Abraham Lincoln, at that

time six years of age, was the eldest. The family soon after moved into Indiana, where Lincoln went through the hard apprenticeship of a squatter's life. He had but little schooling, some six months or so, but he learned to be master of the rifle, the axe, and the plough. As he got older and stronger he became first a shepherd boy, afterwards workman in a saw mill, then a boatman on the Wabash and Mississippi, and ultimately a railway platelayer. At the age of twenty-one he emigrated into Illinois, which was rapidly settling at that time, and for about a year worked as day-labourer on a farm near Springfield. He devoted his leisure time to self-education, and his next promotion was to be clerk in a store. He took part as a volunteer in the war against the Blackhawk Indians, and was elected captain of his company. Two years after that he was elected a member of the State legislature, in which he sat for four consecutive sessions; he also at this time began to practise, with considerable success, as a barrister. Thenceforward he became one of the leaders of the Whig party in Illinois, and took an active part in all political contests. Elected to Congress in 1846, he withdrew in 1849, for the purpose of devoting his time to the practice of his profession and the education of his children. In 1859 the Republicans drew him from his retirement, and set him up as candidate for the Senate, in opposition to Mr. Douglas. During nearly two months the rival candidates canvassed Illinois, making a fresh speech every day,



often coming across each other, and on such occasions engaging in one of those oratorical duels which are the delight of the American people. In this contest Mr. Lincoln showed to considerable advantage, though he had for his opponent one of the most renowned public speakers in the Union; he actually received 3000 more votes than his opponent, though the unequal population of the electoral districts gave the latter the victory. It was this contest that brought Mr. Lincoln prominently before the Western populations, and that gained for him their support at Chicago. His very moderate and conservative opinions, evidenced by his conduct in Congress where he was a staunch supporter of Henry Clay, tended to re-assure the most timid politicians; his protectionist principles endeared him to the manufacturing States; and the working classes hailed him as one of themselves, a self-made man, who had known the hardships and trials of poverty, and who by intelligence, toil, and honesty, had raised himself from the lowest sphere to the noblest and most exalted position that could be held by the citizen of a great country.

Mr. Lincoln's nomination was a heavy blow to Mr. Douglas. It was on his influence, supposed or real, in the Valley of the Mississippi, that the latter principally relied. With a Western man opposed to him this influence was much shaken, and without the united support of the Democratic party he was not sure to escape defeat, even in Illinois. These considerations revived the hopes of his per-

sonal enemies whose courage had been somewhat damped by his oratorical triumph in the Senate, and by testimonies of sympathy that had reached him from the South. In his great speech Mr. Douglas had cut off his own retreat, by declaring that nothing on earth would induce him to give in to the principle that Congress had a right to interfere in the Territories; at the same time the Senate had adopted Jefferson Davis's resolutions, and by so doing had given the warrant of its authority to the principle he so resolutely opposed. The leading demagogues of the South came, therefore, to an understanding as to the course they should follow in the Democratic Convention about to assemble on the 18th June, at Baltimore, in consequence of the resolution come to some weeks before at Charleston. The delegates who had seceded at Charleston had had a private meeting at Richmond; it was expected that they would have nominated candidates, they were, however, too wise to make a mistake which would have deprived them of the right to vote at Baltimore, and rendered Mr. Douglas's nomination a certainty. They arrived therefore, in due time at Baltimore, and claimed their right to sit in the Convention. Their re-admission would have deprived Mr. Douglas of all chance of obtaining the necessary majority of two-thirds, it was therefore opposed by both Northern and Southern Democrats, and after long stormy debates, their demand was rejected. On the other hand, the Convention ad-

mitted two sets of delegates nominated by Mr. Douglas's friends in Alabama and Louisiana. This unfair proceeding was followed at once by the secession of the delegates of Virginia, and of the Southern delegates almost in a body, and with them seceded a certain number of Northern delegates, including the Chairman, Caleb Cushing, of Massachusetts. While Mr. Douglas's friends, having succeeded in silencing all opposition, proceeded to nominate their candidate unanimously, the seceders adjourned to a room hard by, which had been prepared for them in expectation of what would happen, and there proceeded to organize a rival convention. The candidates they selected were not, as might have been supposed, extreme men, they were Mr. Breckinridge of Kentucky, and Senator Lane of Oregon. These nominations bore witness to considerable prudence and forethought. General Lane's nomination was in fulfilment of a promise made to the delegates of Oregon and California in return for their support, while that of Mr. Breckinridge was wisely conceived for the purpose of detaching from Mr. Douglas the senators and moderate men, inasmuch as the candidate, besides being Vice-President at the time, was an amiable kindly man, very popular with the Democratic party.

The seceders were 125 in number, out of a convention of 300 delegates, they, however, represented the whole of the South, the only States in which the Democratic candidate was safe, and therefore in

fact they constituted in themselves the strength of the party. Mr. Douglas soon found this to his cost ; his friends had selected Mr. Fitzpatrick of Alabama for the Vice-Presidency ; this gentleman, however, who at an early age had become Governor of his State and senator, courteously refused the intended honour, and in his place the party were compelled to fall back upon Mr. Herschel Johnson of Georgia, who accepted the post. Unluckily, however, the first time he attempted to address the people in his own State, of which he had been Governor, he was hooted and mobbed, and narrowly escaped personal injury. Mr. Douglas had imagined that he could confidently reckon on the more moderate and enlightened of the Southern men, in this also he was mistaken, their zeal on his behalf had arisen not from preference for himself, but merely because they thought his name to be the only one that would awaken any sympathy in the Free States ; now that a final rupture had taken place, and that no further good could be done, they were no longer inclined to incur odium among their neighbours for a cause which they felt was lost. They either declined altogether to vote, or else gave in their adhesion to Mr. Breckinridge. Mr. Buchanan, whose vengeance was not even yet satiated, gave audience to a deputation of the seceding convention, approved highly the choice they had made, and promised the most zealous co-operation on the part of the government. To give proof of his zeal

in the cause a subscription was opened in the ministerial departments for Mr. Breckinridge, and all the officials were *recommended* to give fifteen days' pay as their quota, while a good many employées who had been unlucky enough to promise Mr. Douglas their support were summarily dismissed. Wherever the influence of government could make itself felt the local Democratic committees pronounced for Mr. Breckinridge.

#### IV.

The severance so long foreboded was at last accomplished and irrevocable. The vast importance of this fact was not to be measured by its influence on the chance of success of this or that candidate, it had a far wider and more extended bearing. The election of 1856 had shown that a great majority of the citizens of the Northern States were radically hostile to slavery; but at that time there existed, even in New England, a party ready to make common cause with the South, viz. the Northern Democrats, who had for a time given their support to Mr. Douglas, and whose influence had been powerful enough to carry the votes of several States. The election of 1860 was destined to make manifest the extinction of this intermediate party, the rupture of this last bond of union between the two divisions of the republic. Not only was it hopeless to attempt to get the vote of a single Free State for a



candidate supported by the South, but such a candidate would have opposed to him the energetic population of the North in one homogeneous and unanimous mass. The crisis then which was to decide the fate of the Union had at last really and truly arrived. When Mr. Wigfall, senator for Texas, in advocating the cause of Mr. Breckinridge before the citizens of Wheeling, told them that if any other candidate was elected they must look for storms, that the confederation might indeed continue to exist, but would only include thirty-three States, his audience may have felt that his forebodings were true, but they must have felt also that Mr. Breckinridge had not a shadow of a chance of success. However much people may have been prepared for the breaking-up of the Democratic party, an event so pregnant with future consequences could not take place without profoundly agitating the public mind.

These party dissensions were, however, gratifying to the Unionists. They thought they were sure of all those Southern States in which in 1856 they had equalled the Democratic party at that time unanimous, and they therefore hoped that their candidate would come before Congress with more votes than Mr. Breckinridge, an important item in his prospects of success. In reality, however, it was the Republican party that reaped the fruit of all these divisions, to them the conflict in the Central States would no longer be against a compact phalanx of

adversaries, but against a demoralized and disorganized mob. Their hopes of victory became stronger day by day, and to their great joy the first fruit of all this discord was to convert a portion of their enemies into allies. Since Mr. Van Buren and the free-soilers had been excommunicated from the Democratic party on the ground of suspected orthodoxy on the slavery question, the "fire-eaters" had had it all their own way in the South, and had managed not only the politics of the party, but also the tone of its newspapers. Slavery, therefore, in the opinion of these scribes was no longer as it used to be twenty years ago, an evil, necessary indeed, but yet an evil; on the contrary, it was now the corner-stone of the Constitution, a civilizing moral institution useful alike to black and white, its propagandism was preached; to suppress slavery, exclaimed at Charleston Mr. Goulden of Georgia, would be to make American civilization retrograde two centuries! When Mr. Jefferson Davis was arguing that Congress ought to support the extension of slavery he dared to invoke the interests of humanity. The rigorous censorship, which stops at the frontier of the Southern States the books and newspapers of the North, which closes the mouths of travellers, and by the threat of murder silences even the ministers of the gospel, made it impossible to refute these monstrous doctrines. Mr. Douglas's cold expediency might not harmonize with the views of enlightened and christian men on these subjects, but

it was preferable a hundred times to their brutal eulogy of a terrible social evil. It was impossible for him even to defend his non-intervention principles without contradicting what was now the favourite theme of the South, that slavery ought to be extended on account of its high and excellent moral qualities. In all his arguments for squatter sovereignty he was obliged to beg the question that the principle of slavery is bad, and his opponents were not slow in bringing this fact into strong relief. From this it naturally followed that an argument upon the pros and cons of slavery should arise among those very Southern men who had hitherto never questioned its merits, and that the seed of thought and reflection should be sown in certain minds, which might hereafter fructify into sound and wholesome ideas.

The tide had turned, and was now flowing in favour of the Republicans. The members of this party had drawn up and carried through the House of Representatives a Bill modifying the Tariff in a Protectionist sense, but which from its moderation might be looked upon as a compromise, and justified by the state of the public finances. All the influence of the Northern Democrats was brought to bear on Mr. Buchanan, by representing to him that it was a life or death question for the party in the Central States, to induce him to use his influence with the Southern Senators to allow the Bill to pass. Mr. Buchanan refused to make use of his

influence ; the measure was postponed until the close of the session, but was at last rejected. Immediately after this unpopular vote, the Report of the Committee of the House of Representatives was published, in which flagrant charges of political corruption, of venality, of falsifying electoral lists, of sale of places, were brought home to several high officials, and to sundry leaders of the Democratic party. The Republicans did not fail to give to these charges the widest possible circulation ; they justified all the attacks they had for four years made on the party, and some of them were of a nature to explain the "reason why" of their own previous want of success.

It so happened that the population of Illinois had, in obedience to the universal custom in America of nicknaming political celebrities, given Mr. Lincoln the *soubriquet* of "honest Abraham ;" this was taken up by the multitude, and what had been intended merely as a tribute to the private virtues of an individual, became an expression giving utterance to the national feeling of disgust and contempt for a venal executive. The inhabitants of Springfield, anxious to commemorate the nomination of their fellow citizen by the Convention at Chicago, sent their municipal authorities to compliment him, and at the same time to announce their intention to fire a salute of one hundred and one guns. "Let us be economical at once," said Mr. Lincoln, laughing, "one-and-twenty rounds will

do." This harmless joke went the round of the Confederation, and men were glad to recognize in its author one who would stop the frauds on the Exchequer, and who would restore order and economy to the public finances.

As day by day the Republicans gained strength, the hearts of their opponents began to fail. The Unionists made no progress in the North; the choice of the Republicans had cut away the ground from under their feet; they had looked for the name of Mr. Seward, and had intended to make political capital out of all the hatred and terror that that name evoked. The nomination of an old Whig, unpledged to any extreme policy, and to whose moderation Mr. Benjamin, of Louisiana, himself bore testimony, quite upset all their plans and all the hopes they had founded upon them. No conservative classes, scared by the nomination of Mr. Seward, flocked to their standard! The traditions of 1856, were not in their favour, they had proved the party to be weak in numbers, giving little hope of a majority in any Free State; and then there was the Report of the Parliamentary Committee, which told sad tales about the Unionists, how for instance they had not always fought under true colours; in that Report it was set forth how in 1856, the managing Committee of the Democratic party had spent large sums in the Central States in subsidizing newspapers, speakers, and even committees for the Unionists, that this was done with the sole object of dividing Mr.



Buchanan's opponents, and that to these tactics the President had owed his success in Pennsylvania, and with it his election. The newspapers and the men who had played this part of decoy ducks were cited by name, and the sum mentioned that each had received. These revelations weighed heavily on the Unionist party, they tainted its every act with suspicion, and made many stand aloof who would gladly have joined a real and substantial party, but who did not choose to be the dupes or the tools of a band of intriguers. As to the two sections of the Democrats, they were much more busy in tearing each other to pieces than in opposing the common enemy. The one was always asserting that Lincoln was ten times better than Douglas, the other that he was far preferable to Breckinridge, so that by degrees the effect produced was a general impression that Lincoln was the man. Thus the election of 1860, when it came round had none of those incidents of deep interest that marked the election of 1856. It was not the earnest, feverish, maddening conflict of two great parties of nearly equal strength, alike confident, and where victory remained in suspense until the last moment. On the one side was confidence, on the other discouragement, forebodings of evil, and mutual recriminations. The whole interest of the electoral drama was concentrated on Mr. Douglas. Of the four candidates he was the most distinguished, and also the one whose chance of success was least. That he should win three things

were necessary : firstly, that Mr. Lincoln should not obtain the absolute majority ; secondly, that himself should be one of the three first candidates ; and thirdly, that the choice of the House of Representatives should fall on him. It seemed unlikely that he should even attain to the second of these preliminaries. The dogged hatred of Mr. Buchanan, which flagged not though the defeat of his enemy was certain, kept raising all over the North committees for Breckinridge with the view of dividing the Democrats, and he had succeeded in extinguishing the hopes of Mr. Douglas in every Free State, except, perhaps, Illinois. In the South, the States that had seceded at Charleston were safe for Breckinridge. There was nothing left, therefore, but seven or eight Slave States, and in them he must beat the friends of Mr. Breckinridge, supported by the President, and the Unionists. His position appeared to be desperate ; yet he must go on, retreat was impossible. On the one hand he would have got no thanks for a simulated desire to restore harmony to the party, and on the other, he would have been compelled to sacrifice the principle on which he had based his secession from the ranks of the Ultra-democrats.

Mr. Douglas determined to carry the thing through, though he felt no doubt as to the issue. To the ultras of the South his defeat would be due, and he resolved to concentrate all his energies against their candidate, and do them all the harm in his power. A thorough beating would lower their

pride, show them their weakness, and make them see that there was no safety for slave institutions but in a reorganization of the Democratic party. They must then return to him, embodying as he did the Democratic party of the North; and the more he made them feel his power, the less likely they were to rebel again. Mr. Douglas not only made his managing committee publish an address pledging themselves to no compromise with Mr. Breckinridge, but he determined to carry the war in person into the enemy's camp. A custom has grown up in the United States, founded on prudential motives, that when a public man has accepted a nomination to the Presidency he should give up all appearances in public of every kind, he should write no letter and make no speech; all letters respecting his opinions, past or present, he hands over to his committee, and they undertake to answer them. No candidate was ever known to make a canvassing tour on his own behalf. All this etiquette Mr. Douglas scattered to the winds. For three months he journeyed through the length and breadth of the confederation, making every day a speech, and speaking every day upon the same text. "The republicans and fire-eaters," said he, "are equally conspiring to destroy the Union: the former are always threatening separation, the latter incessantly fanning the flame of a deplorable contest. The only means of preserving the integrity of the confederation is to put in practice the fundamental principle of the constitution,

the sovereignty of the people, and allow always and everywhere the majority of the inhabitants to decide whether slavery shall or shall not be established. By this means alone can the separatists of North and South be rendered equally powerless." All the large cities of the Slave States were in turn visited by Mr. Douglas, and thanks to the oratorical sparring matches in which he almost daily engaged with Mr. Breckinridge's supporters, the contest did not lack life and interest.

Such then was the state of parties in America at the close of the exciting ordeal of selecting candidates. The Republicans had made a choice that secured to them the conservative classes and all the enemies of slavery; the Unionists, with no definite policy, inspired general distrust; lastly, the Democrats were divided into two sections, the South supporting Breckinridge, the North, Douglas, both contending against the true interest of their common party. The electoral campaign opened with a success of the Republicans, an omen of greater victories in store for them. General Lane, the candidate of the Democrats for the Vice-Presidency, was rejected from the Senate by Oregon, and Frank Blair was re-elected representative by St. Louis of Missouri. It was Mr. Blair's first election which produced so great a sensation three years before, when to the astonishment of everybody the capital of a Slave State chose as their representative to Congress a declared opponent of slavery.

At the following election a Democrat was returned by a very small majority, but Mr. Blair succeeded in proving that his defeat was owing to fraudulent practices in the election, and at the close of the session of 1860 his opponent had been declared unduly elected, and he had obtained the seat. As however his seat would have been vacated in due course before the recess was over, Mr. Blair at once resigned in order to be re-elected, and thus give his party the moral support of an electoral triumph at the opening of the campaign. His plan met with full success, and a Republican victory in a Slave State was the first mortification of the Democratic party. A local election took place some days later in Kentucky, the support of the Republicans enabled a Unionist candidate to beat the Democrat.

The Southern men began to perceive with dismay that a Republican nucleus was forming in the Slave States themselves. Encouraged by Blair's election, his friends undertook to make out a list of federal electors in favour of Lincoln, and thus to vote directly for the Republican candidate instead of voting for the Unionist list as they had done in 1856. No stop was put to their proceedings, and no attempt was made to set aside and consider as void all Republican votes, as had been done in 1856 with the votes recorded for Colonel Fremont. In Kentucky, a true hero, worthy of the name he bore, Mr. Cassius Clay, had made himself for many years the missionary of freedom. He had formed in the



mountains of Kentucky a little band of Republicans, mainly emigrants from Pennsylvania reinforced by converts. Frequently had his life been in danger. In March, 1860, his village had been invaded, and his wife and family threatened with exile; but nothing would intimidate him, and at last his indomitable nerve had compelled his opponents to bow to freedom of speech in his person. With his revolver and bowie knife in his belt, he had been the apostle of Republican opinions in Kentucky, none caring to molest him, for it was known that he would sell his life dear. His intrepidity and perseverance as well as his open-hearted good humour had won the hearts of that wild population, who thought they saw in him a worthy representative of the Kentuckian of the good old times. In the same way there had been formed in the Highlands of Tennessee, a region unfitted for negro labour and gradually settling from the North, a few isolated bands of anti-slavery men who encouraged by the depression of the Democrats no longer concealed their republican sympathies. In their case again no opposition was offered to the free expression of their opinions, and encouraged by their example the inhabitants of the Northern counties of Virginia hoisted the Republican standard, without bringing upon themselves the persecutions that had followed a similar course in 1856. Lastly, in Maryland, a Republican committee was openly formed in Baltimore which gave out that in future it should bring

forward its candidates at the local elections. The Republicans of Delaware also organized with the intention of freeing themselves from the yoke of the Unionists. Thus, if the free central States obey to a certain degree the impulse of the South, they also react upon her by the natural spread of liberal ideas, since the six conterminous Slave States each contain a germ of anti-slavery opinion. In reality all these manifestations were without effect upon the election, and did not benefit Mr. Lincoln by bringing him a single vote, but they were of extreme importance with regard to the future, and were the most significant feature of the whole electoral conflict.

The rejection by the Senate of the Tariff Bill had exactly the effect that Mr. Bigler had predicted. It produced a deep feeling of irritation in the manufacturing districts; in New Jersey, for instance, where many mills were closed in consequence of English competition, and where emigration was thinning the working population, and in Pennsylvania where the iron districts were suffering, strong symptoms of opposition began to display themselves. It now seemed likely that Mr. Lincoln would succeed in these two States and in Indiana, in which case his election would be safe. But one course remained open to his opponents, by which this consummation might be avoided and the election transferred to Congress, and that was a coalition among themselves.

In New Jersey, where Mr. Breckinridge's friends

wielded the power of the Democratic organization, an understanding was come to with the Unionists, both parties agreed to support a common list of federal electors equally divided between them, so that each candidate should have half the votes of the State. In New York, where Mr. Douglas's friends formed the strength of the party, a similar understanding was attempted; ten out of the thirty-five electors were offered by the Democrats to the Unionists, but there was some mystification in the matter as to whether these electors were to be pledged to vote for Mr. Bell under any circumstances, or whether they might not under certain conditions vote for Douglas. This was never made quite clear, and each party read the bargain by the light of their own interests. It so happened that the Unionists were in the main strong native Americans, zealous against naturalization and foreigners, while Mr. Douglas's supporters were in great part Germans, who held in abomination the Unionists and all who agreed with them. No sooner, therefore, had the coalition list appeared, than persons included on both sides hastened to withdraw their names and to denounce the scheme. Mr. Ottendorfer, the editor of the leading German newspaper, peremptorily declined to allow his name to appear in the same list with those of electors known to be hostile to the naturalized citizens. Some also of the chiefs of the Unionists, such as Messrs. Dodge and Putnam, protested against the coalition, they had meant to support a

*bonâ fide* party and not to be a catspaw of the Democrats ; they gave out their intention of supporting Mr. Lincoln, and from that time forward openly took part in the Republican demonstrations.

The elections of Vermont and Maine, which took place early in September, and in which the Republicans had it all their own way, convinced Mr. Lincoln's opponents, that it would require all the strength they could muster to defeat him, and that they had no time to lose. The President and his Ministers felt that they must act and that speedily, they therefore took the initiative, and a bitter pill it must have been to them, in persuading Mr. Breckinridge's supporters to come to an understanding with Mr. Douglas's friends, and lay before them a scheme for a triple coalition in the Northern States. The negotiation was long and troublesome, several times it came to a stop, and at each dilemma a fresh batch of Democrats went over in disgust to the Republicans. Perhaps the most distasteful part of the transaction was its being a hole and corner proceeding between the committees, and its inevitable result that in the local elections a mixed list should be put out, in which good care must be taken of the private interests of the leaders of all the three parties ; this had an ugly look of barter and sale, the *quid pro quo* being the consciences and votes of the independent electors. Many good sort of people protested against this arrangement, which disposed of their votes without asking their leave, and the feeling

evoked, tended greatly to weaken the Unionist party in New York. In Pennsylvania, the same sort of thing took place with about the same result. The October elections were looked for with much anxiety as affording a means of gauging the strength of the coalition; on the 8th of October, just one month before the nomination of the Federal electors, the three great central States, Pennsylvania, Ohio and Indiana, representing in the aggregate 63 votes for the Presidency, were to elect their Governors. In these three States the opposition had coalesced, nevertheless the three Republicans were elected. In Pennsylvania, Mr. Curtin had a majority of 30,000, and the number of electors that voted was so considerable that there was no chance of reversing the decision. But, perhaps, the most striking feature was the result of the voting in Philadelphia, where, instead of a Democratic majority of two-thirds of the electors, Mr. Foster, notwithstanding his great personal popularity, could only manage to head the Republican candidate by a paltry 2000. The 'New York Herald,' the heart and soul of the triple fusion, was obliged to allow that the game was up in Pennsylvania, and that the only chance was to fight it out in New York. It therefore entreated, in despairing tones, the three oppositions to concentrate on New York all their energies and all their resources, not even flinching from bribery if necessary. There is nothing, however, so trying to the temper as defeat; the three worthy members of the coalition felt



out, and each threatened to try his chance alone. There was for a time, a talk of making all the three candidates withdraw, and putting up a single one instead, but the time had gone by, it was too late for any such device, and for want of anything better to do, the trio spent the month of October in mutual recrimination and abuse.

As a forlorn hope an attempt was made at the last moment to put the screw on New York; all the Southern houses countermanded their orders, or postponed them until after the election; heavy sales of stock were made on their account; they required the payment of all debts due to them in cash, the deposits in the New York banks diminished rapidly, and it seemed as if the crisis of 1857 was about to return. But the whole thing was too artificial to last, especially at a time when English speculators were making daily purchases of corn from the West to an immense amount. Political intimidation was next tried, and it proved as unsuccessful as the monetary "screw." The Governor of South Carolina, in opening the Session of the Legislature, recommended the two Houses to take the necessary steps to enable South Carolina to secede from the confederation, if Mr. Lincoln should be nominated. The legislature named a commission with plenary powers to negotiate, in such an event, the secession of South Carolina, and it decided that it would prolong its session until the 9th of November, so as to be in readiness for all eventualities. The Democratic

and Unionist newspapers made a great hubbub about this important resolution. Unluckily it was not the first time that the legislature of South Carolina had held a similar language, and people remembered how President Jackson in 1833, had demanded and obtained the disbanding of the Carolinian militia, by threatening to march against them at the head of the Federal troops. A single State could do nothing; the South to be feared should be unanimous, and that was far from being the case. Impartial observers noticed that as Mr. Lincoln's election became more and more probable a change came over the language of all the more important Southern men. In June nothing was heard but sinister prophecies. Mr. Lincoln could never be President of the whole Confederation, his election would give the signal for a fearful civil war. In October, Mr. Breckinridge's supporters had found out that they should wait and see what Mr. Lincoln meant to do, and not dissolve the Union until he had perpetrated some flagrant aggression. The threats of the Ultras did not, therefore, intimidate the North, but they were a powerful support to the Unionists in the South as that party became the champion of union and law. It remained for the election to prove that the separatists were in a minority, even in those States wherein they appeared to possess political preponderance.

The 6th of November arrived. The city of New York, over-ridden by the influences we have described, gave a majority of 28,000 to the triple

fusion; but the vote of the State was nevertheless for Lincoln, who received an enthusiastic support from the country electors. In Pennsylvania, the Republicans expected their October majority of 30,000 to diminish, on the contrary it increased to 80,000. All the Free States, except New Jersey, which was won by the coalition, voted for Lincoln. They gave him 169 votes, that is 17 more than the absolute majority, and a month later it was ascertained that Oregon and California had also given him their support. The central States, Delaware, Virginia, Maryland, Tennessee, Kentucky, the oldest, richest, and most populous of the Slave States voted for Bell, who obtained 57 votes, including the seven for New Jersey. Mr. Breckinridge only succeeded in the nine most Southern States, Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas, Alabama, Mississippi, Florida, Georgia, and the two Carolinas; in several of the States he had only a small majority over Bell, and he would have failed in all if Douglas's supporters could have been induced to vote for the Unionist candidate. At the bottom of the list came Mr. Douglas, who only got the vote of the single State of Missouri. Yet Mr. Douglas may be said to have, to a great extent, succeeded in accomplishing his wishes. In the Free States he obtained more votes than Bell and Breckinridge put together, and four or five times as many as Breckinridge alone. He thus proved that the only Democratic party in the North was the party pledged to himself. In the Central States, with the exception

of Missouri, he succumbed to Bell, but on the other hand he distanced Breckinridge. Even in the States of the extreme South he obtained a decent minority. He has, therefore, in his defeat the satisfaction of having proved beyond a doubt the weakness of the Ultra party.

This proof of weakness is the real salient fact of the election of 1860, for it removes the hazard that existed of a civil war. In face of the unanimous North, it would have required a South equally unanimous, equally determined not to give way. The vote that the five States gave to Mr. Bell and the vote of Missouri are equivalent to a declaration of fidelity to the Union. The nine States who alone voted for Breckinridge are not strong enough to try anything by themselves; what would be the worth of a Southern Confederation in which was not found Virginia, Tennessee, Missouri, or Kentucky? It is even doubtful whether in the nine ultra States themselves the separatists are powerful enough to overcome the energetic opposition of the Bell and Douglas party combined to support the Union. It seems too almost certain that their indignation will evaporate in words. Should this be the case the election of 1860 will have had the desirable result of laying the ever-recurring phantom of the dissolution of the Union. When the first bitterness of defeat is over, the South will recognise the folly of attempting to transform Congress into a society for the propagation of slavery against the will of the

vast majority of American citizens. They will feel the madness and folly of irritating the North and risking the public peace for a mere abstract theory. As Mr. Goulden, a wealthy planter of Georgia and the largest slaveholder in the State, remarked in the Convention at Charleston, the legal right to establish slavery in the Territories would be simply useless ; “ for what is a right if you have not the means of exercising it, and those means you do not possess,” he added, “ you have hardly slaves enough for your own estates ; you can only fill Kansas, Nebraska, and the other Territories with slaves by depopulating Maryland, Virginia, and Missouri, which would then become Free States ; you will displace your own strength and add to that of your adversaries. Re-open the slave trade, let us import all the negroes we want from Africa, and then if you please you may undertake to increase the number of the Slave States and propagate slavery ; but until you do that your efforts are useless.”

There was a great leaven of truth in this speech of Mr. Goulden’s, and the Southern men will find it to be so at last. There is no fear that they will re-open the slave trade ; not indeed that they would recoil before the execration of all civilized nations, but simply because they could not do it without an immense depreciation of their own private fortunes, of which a considerable portion is invested in slaves. Slavery is, therefore, destined to remain stationary, and not to advance is to recede. The Free States



will pursue their onward path of progress, they will by degrees surround the slave-labour portion of the territory, and the irresistible contact of liberty will ultimately emancipate the slave.

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## NOTE

*On the Judgment of the Supreme Court of the United States in the case of Dred Scott versus Sandford.*

The plaintiff, Dred Scott, was a Negro slave in 1834, belonging to Dr. Emerson. In that year his master took him to a place, Fort Snelling, north of  $36^{\circ} 30'$  of latitude. While at Snelling he married, and had two daughters, issue of the marriage, one born north, the other south of  $36^{\circ} 30'$  latitude. Subsequently Emerson took Dred Scott and his family into the Slave State of Missouri and sold them to Sandford. Dred Scott brought an action in the Circuit Court of the United States to recover his freedom.

By act of Congress it was declared "that slavery and involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime, shall be for ever prohibited in all that part of the territory, &c. north of  $36^{\circ} 30'$  north latitude, not included in the State of Missouri." It was allowed that Fort Snelling was within the prohibited country.

The case was tried on appeal. Judgment was given against the plaintiff on two grounds.

1st. He had no right to sue, not being a citizen.

2ndly. The "Missouri compromise" was *ipso facto* void, being unconstitutional. The same defect attaching to any acts of Congress adverse to or limiting slavery.

A few extracts will explain the ground on which the judgment of the Court was given.

Taney, C.J., in delivering the judgment of the Court, said, with reference to the first point:—

“This is certainly a very serious question, and one that now, for the first time, has been brought for decision before this Court. The question is simply this, can a Negro, whose ancestors were imported into this country and sold as slaves, become a member of the political community formed and brought into existence by the Constitution of the United States, and as such become entitled to all the rights and privileges and immunities guaranteed by that instrument to the citizen?—one of which rights is the privilege of suing in a Court of the United States in the cases specified in the Constitution.”

There being no explicit declaration on the subject in the Constitution, the Court consider that they must interpret the word citizen according to the feelings and views of the framers of the document. They, therefore, endeavour “*to realize the state of public opinion in relation to that unfortunate race*” at the time the Constitution was drawn; and having made it out to their satisfaction, give it their stamp, as being the *present* law of the Republic.

“They had for more than a century before been regarded as beings of an inferior order, and altogether unfit to associate with the white race, either in social or political relations; and so far inferior, that *they had no rights which the white man was bound to respect; and that the Negro might justly and lawfully be reduced to slavery for his benefit*. He was bought and sold, and treated as an ordinary article of traffic, whenever a profit could be made by it.”

Upon this argument, subsequently amplified and diluted through many pages, it is decided that such an individual *cannot have been meant* to be a citizen, and *therefore* is not a citizen.

The decision of the Court was given by six judges against two, McLean and Curtis dissenting.

In Judge Curtis's judgment a curious instance is given to show that in 1803 the possibility of a Negro citizen was contemplated. In an act of Congress of that year masters of vessels are prohibited under certain conditions to import or bring "any negro, mulatto, or other person of colour, not being a native or *citizen* or registered seaman of the United States."

Much stress had been laid in the judgment of the Court on the words of the Militia Act, which directs the enrolment of "every free, able-bodied, white male citizen." Upon which Judge Curtis remarks, "The assumption from this that none but *white* persons are citizens would be as inconsistent with the just import of this language, as that all citizens are able-bodied, or males!"

The Court after explaining at great length the cause of the want of jurisdiction of the Circuit Court from whence the appeal came, and also its own want of jurisdiction, proceeds to give the citizens of the United States the benefit of its opinion, and that of the several judges, on the slave question in general. Mr. Justice Nelson seems to have been awake to the extraordinary proceeding of appending a politi-

cal harangue to the judgment of a "Court of Justice" which had just decided that an appeal must be dismissed, being "coram non iudice," so he tells us "that if we suppose that the Court is acting extra judicially in giving an opinion, because it has decided that this Court has no jurisdiction to examine the case upon its merits," that "such an assertion is an error arising from misapprehension." The error he explains, truly enough, to arise from people supposing the Supreme Court of the United States to be guided by the same rules as other Courts elsewhere.

The slavery question is settled in the broadest and most decided way. Some further extracts from the "decision" will show that, in the opinion of the six judges, the Republic is saddled with an incubus in Territory and State, north and south, slave and free, from which not even Congress has power to free her.

After premising

"That the Federal Government can exercise no power over the person or property of a citizen beyond what the Constitution confers, nor lawfully deny him any right which it has reserved :"

The judgment goes on to suppose an extreme case.

"No one, we presume, will contend that Congress can deny to the people the right to keep and bear arms, or the right to trial by jury, or compel any one to be a witness against himself in a criminal proceeding." "These powers,



and others which it is not necessary to enumerate here, are in express terms denied to the General Government, and the rights of private property have been guarded with equal care. Hence an Act of Congress which deprives a citizen of the United States of his liberty or *property*, merely because he came himself or *brought his property* into a particular territory of the United States, and who had committed no offence against the laws, could hardly be dignified with the name of due process of law."

After proclaiming their duty "to protect private property against the encroachments of the Government," the Court solemnly gives utterance to the following astounding dictum :—

"Upon these considerations it is the opinion of the Court that the Act of Congress which prohibited a citizen from holding and owning property of this kind (*i.e.* slaves) in the territory of the United States north of the line therein mentioned, is not warranted by the Constitution, and is therefore void ; and that neither Dred Scott himself nor any of his family were made free by being carried into this territory, even if they had been carried there by the owner with the intention of becoming a permanent resident."

The innovation of considering a slave a mere chattel or portion of goods, upon which this superstructure of "constitutional law" was founded, was as great and surprising in America as it would be in Europe.

Judge McLean in his able "opinion" stated "in 1851 the Court of Appeals of South Carolina recog-

nised the principle that a slave being taken to a free state became free ;” and he added, “ The slave states have generally adopted the rule that where a master has resided with his slave in a state or territory where slavery is prohibited, the slave *was entitled to his freedom everywhere*. This was the settled doctrine of the Supreme Court of Missouri. It has been so held in Mississippi, in Virginia, in Louisiana, formerly in Kentucky, Maryland, and in other states.”

The doctrine would therefore appear to be as much opposed to precedent, as it is repulsive to common sense, and revolting to humanity.

We can hardly wonder that the Northern States, formerly Free, but now, until this decision is reversed, Slave States, have been compelled at last to take up the challenge thus insolently flung in their faces. They are, however, strong enough to hold their own, and if they should hereafter strike their flag to the South and submit to the brand of slavery, they will deserve to bear it. We will, therefore, shortly consider the effect of this decision of the Supreme Court upon the persons it most immediately concerns, who have none but God to help them,—the Negro slave, and the free black.

When we reflect that the decision we have just considered affects 4,490,000 human beings, unarmed and defenceless, in the midst of twice that number of bitter and implacable enemies, armed to the teeth, we may well say of them in the words of

Scripture, "that they are cast down *bound* in the midst of the burning fiery furnace." All hope is taken from them, redress they have none, they may be robbed, ill-treated, trampled upon, kidnapped, their wives, their children, themselves, hurried down South and sold in the plantations, "for the black man has no rights which the white man is bound to respect." And such has been the result: kidnapping the free blacks and their families, men who have been free for generations, and who have the tastes and education of free men, is now an "institution" of the Southern States. And the States themselves, unwilling to leave this lucrative trade entirely to private speculators, have gone into the business. In 1859 the legislature of Arkansas passed a law banishing all free negroes from the State. All the wretched beings that had not left house and home before January 1, 1860, were sold by auction for slaves! Missouri, in the same way, has passed a law by which all free negroes found in the territory of the State on September 1, 1861, are *ipso facto* slaves. If any free negro from another State should enter Missouri, at the end of twelve hours he becomes a slave. Louisiana, not to be left behind in the race, has voted a law the counterpart of Missouri. Mississippi, more keen after blood-money than her sisters, gave the free negroes only six months' law, from January 1 to July 1, 1860, but with a refinement of Pecksniffian morality which makes one shudder, it added a clause that the money

realized by their sale should be spent in founding schools. Georgia has endeavoured to accomplish the same ends with similar unblushing hypocrisy, and has enacted that all free negroes convicted of idleness or immorality should be slaves for a year, and that for the second offence the penalty should be slavery for life.

The inhabitants of Maryland have petitioned their Legislature that the 75,000 free negroes residing in their State be made slaves at once and divided among them, and the refusal they got was accompanied by measures that will rapidly accomplish their wish. It is therefore evident that the Legislatures are awake to the fact that they must be stirring, if they do not wish to leave to private hands all the rich booty with which the Dred Scott decision has provided them.

With respect to the poor Negro Slave his fate is now much as it used to be, but in one respect it is aggravated, he has lost the last resource of the captive, hope. The Dred Scott decision may be said to have made his wretched existence a true Hell on earth, and to have inscribed in letters of fire over the portals of his life—

*Lasciate ogni speranza !*

The opinions of the Judges in this leading case are contained in 230 closely printed octavo pages. The decision of the Court delivered by the Chief Justice is weak and verbose, wanting in that ac-

curacy and care we are accustomed to recognize in the recorded decisions of our Courts, deeply tinged with prejudice, and defective in grammar; it is chiefly remarkable for two things.

1st.—Directly, for its bearing on the prospects of four and a half millions of human beings, and incidentally, for its destruction of the American Union.

“Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth.”

2ndly.—For giving judicial sanction to the well known dictum of Proudhon, (though perhaps not exactly in the sense he intended) which has not hitherto been received in Courts of Law.

*La propriété c'est le vol.*

W. J.

























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